

The National View

"Not Arbitrable."—"I do not regard the question of the principle of the eight-hour day as arbitrable," declared Mr. Wilson in his last speech at Shadow Lawn, in which he made pretense of defending his course regarding the railway wage-increase scale. The Erdman act, formally enacted by Congress, treats the eight-hour day as arbitrable. In fact, it especially enjoins on the board of mediation and conciliation which it creates the duty of, first, offering its own services as a mediator and, second, failing to effect a settlement in the role of mediator, to do all in its power to bring about arbitration of any controversy which may arise between common carriers and their employees. Every president prior to Mr. Wilson has regarded a formal enactment of Congress as establishing the principle embodied therein, subject only to the verdict of the supreme court that such statute violated the constitution. But with Mr. Wilson has come the new dispensation, the rule that the personal opinion of the president is supreme and that before it no law enacted by Congress is of value.

In Latin America.—Nothing has recently occasioned greater amusement in New York than President Wilson's declaration apropos of the Latin American republics that, "for the first time in my recollection they are beginning to trust and to believe in us and want us, and one of my chief concerns has been to see that nothing was done that did not show friendship and good faith on our part." In the light of his own invasion of Vera Cruz, his unreasoning decree that "Huerta must go," his employing of force in San Domingo and Haiti, even compelling the latter country by force of arms to change its constitution to suit his views, and his present menacing attitude towards Nicaragua, Mr. Wilson's declaration strikes those New Yorkers who are in close touch with Latin America and the views of the people there as ludicrous in the extreme. The view entertained here—it is more than a view, it is a conviction—is that no president has done so much, or done it so effectively as Mr. Wilson to alienate Latin-American friendship and to destroy confidence in the good faith of the United States among the people of South and Central America.

PRESIDENT DOES NOT OBSERVE NEUTRALITY

On Eve of Election, Mr. Wilson Drops All Talk of Hyphenates.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 29.—Has President Wilson maintained strict neutrality toward the European belligerents?

Has the president demonstrated devotion to "America first?"

These questions have been raised by the record of the administration and naturally cannot be eliminated from consideration by voters in deciding

whether Hughes or Wilson shall be entrusted with the direction of the government the next two years.

The president has been the author of many admirable professions of neutrality and has fittingly phrased all true Americans' concept of "America first." At one time his campaign for re-election had for its central theme "hyphenated Americanism," that species of disloyalty which he was always careful to state was of insignificant proportions.

The Americanism issue now has been relegated to the background by the administration. The Democratic leaders were opposed to antagonizing further a great body of foreign born voters.

Soon Put on the Defense.—Moreover, the administration found itself finally placed on the defensive on the very issue it had raised. It was contended that if the president had been sincerely actuated by the spirit of traditional Americanism the most powerful neutral nation in the world would have been able to prevent Germany

from killing 150 of its citizens on the high seas and to stop the continuous depreciation upon its foreign trade and its mail and telegraph by Great Britain. The toleration of British domination by the president has caused him to be charged widely with harboring British sympathies.

The administration, compelled to meet these charges, did so in various ways. One cabinet member explained that the president is not disposed to take drastic measures against Great Britain because he believes English friendship a valuable asset of the United States and looks forward to a divi-

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sion of world trade between England and America after the war. That, however, was before Great Britain initiated the scheme to monopolize world trade after the war, at which even some administration leaders now take alarm.

Secretary Lansing Explains.—Secretary of State Lansing explained at one time that the United States could not take forceful measures against England because of the Bryan peace treaty requiring the submission of all disputes to a year's investigation. He also said he would not require England to discontinue its aggressions upon the United States because they did not involve the sacrifice of American lives.

After Germany promised the president conditionally to reform its submarine warfare, the question at once arose whether the president would proceed effectively against England. Immediately Secretary Lansing explained that the efforts to procure British respect for American rights would be suspended indefinitely because Germany had made its promise of submarine reform contingent upon the president compelling England to modify the blockade. The administration, he contended, refused to put itself in the position of purchasing immunity for Americans. Hitherto, however, the president had maintained that he was dealing independently with the British and German cases, resisting all of Berlin's efforts to connect them. Lansing now said Germany had connected them.

Loans Unneutral—at First.—Soon after the European war started the president issued his appeal to the people to be neutral even in thought, and also expressed the opinion that the flotation of loans to belligerents would be a violation of the spirit of neutrality. Less than a year later, however, he offered no opposition to the flotation of the \$500,000,000 loan to the Allies.

In sharp contrast was the president's consistent denial of German contentions that the American trade in munitions violated neutrality. He refused to assent to an embargo sought by the central powers because they were unable to transport munitions from America.

Dumba's Recall.—There was every evidence that the majority of the American people commended the action of the president in causing the recall of Dr. Dumba, the Austrian ambassador, for promoting a scheme to tie up munition factories with strikes, but Mr. Wilson was in possession of the proof against Dumba a week before the newspaper exposure of the plot and did not act until he found public opinion favorable.

The German attaches, Boy-Ed and Von Papen, were involved in the Dumba affair, but the president took no action against them until several months later, when he caused their recall on alleged new evidence which the state department refused to make public.

American neutrality was violated by German agents in the forgery of passports, the blowing up of munition plants, the breaking of parole by interned German naval officers, the engineering of a gigantic propaganda to influence American public opinion and Congress, the plots to destroy the Welland canal, and the provisioning of German cruisers from American ports. Some of the minor agents were indicted and a few were convicted, but the administration never proceeded against the higher German officials alleged even by the department of justice to be responsible.

British Recruitment Here.—That the president, however, should have dismissed three Teutonic officials while doing nothing to punish British officials for violations of American neutrality caused him to be assailed for partiality to England. It was notorious that the British government was recruiting soldiers on American soil in the manner that caused President Pierce to dismiss British Minister Crampton during the Crimean war. The department of justice convicted some of the recruiting agents, but no action was taken against the British officials responsible, although British Ambassador Spring-Rice openly defended the operations.

When the session of Congress opened last winter the president promised drastic action against the authors of foreign plots on American soil. He said that it would be necessary to amend the American neutrality laws, more than a century old, and announced that the department of justice would frame such amendments and that he would cause their passage by Congress.

That was the last heard of the matter. When the presidential campaign began to warm up Mr. Wilson appeared to lose interest. The amendments were prepared by the department of justice, but were not introduced in Congress until August 5, too late to obtain consideration under the president's mandate.

Criticized by Harvey.—Concerning this failure of the president to act against the disloyalists whom he denounced, Col. George Harvey, who put Mr. Wilson in politics, says:

"Now if it be a fact—and surely no president would make so grave an accusation unless sure of his ground—that disloyalty is not only 'active' in the United States, but even 'shows its ugly head' where he can 'see it'; in other words, as is plainly im-

plied, the country is infested with traitors whose whereabouts are known or discoverable, whose business is it to run them to earth and either drive them out of the country or put them in jail? Surely the obligation does not rest upon Mr. Hughes, who has nothing to do with the matter, to 'modify their policy'."

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